

A
LETTER

1784

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A

L E T T E R

TO THE

LINEN-MANUFACTURERS

OF

I R E L A N D,

ON THE

S U B J E C T

OF

PROTECTING DUTIES.

D U B L I N:

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A

L E T T E R
T O T H E
L I N E N - M A N U F A C T U R E R S
O F
I R E L A N D.

C H A P. I.

AT a time when so many attempts are made to mislead you, when your feelings are assailed by false compassion, your understandings by mistated evidence, and your spirit is called upon by a spurious patriotism; it may not be a very hopeful, but it is a very laudable task to lay a little truth before you. In my argument I lay no claim to originality, I shall only collect what has been better stated by others,

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others, what the indolence of those who uttered the arguments has neglected to publish, what has been traduced and misrepresented, but has never been answered—When you cast your eyes upon the appendix, you will recollect how the papers which I give you at their full length have been garbled in the public prints, and when you read the arguments which I have endeavoured to class and to reduce to method, you will reflect whether any writer on the subject has ever attempted to answer, without having first endeavoured to misrepresent them.

BEFORE you consider in what manner you would be affected, if the duty on the staple manufacture of a sister country should be retaliated on the staple manufacture of Ireland, it is necessary that you should consider the probable effects of the measure itself, independent of those collateral circumstances. We sometimes think things to be of value, merely because there is some danger or difficulty in the pursuit of them. Let us for a while forget that England is more than our ally; let us for a moment suppose her sunk from her monopolizing arrogance, to a more than equitable humility; let us suppose ourselves

selves to be the sole arbiters of the question ; and under these suppositions I will endeavour to prove to you, that a protecting duty, excluding her woollens from our market, would be a measure tending to the diminution of our national wealth and national industry, and very peculiarly injurious to *you*.

You are undoubtedly sensible that the benefits of trade are two-fold. First, it gives an encouragement to the national industry, and increases the national wealth, by giving you a market for your productions, more ample and beneficial than what you could find at home ; and secondly, it procures you a variety of articles for your consumption, which either you could not procure without it, or which you could not procure on so easy terms. The linens which you make are valuable to you, not in proportion to the money which you get for them, but to the quantity of the conveniences and necessaries of life which you can procure for that money. If by importation of these articles, you get them cheaper than you could without importation, then that import trade is so far a benefit to you, and the export of your linens is so far encouraged.

raged. It has been indeed the policy of many countries to endeavour to make at home, what they could buy on better terms from foreigners. According to Mr. Adam Smith, the admirable author of the Treatise on the Wealth of Nations, this policy is always erroneous, and tends to the diminution of the wealth of any nation that adopts it. According to the arguments of the manufacturers of almost every country, this policy is always wise with respect to their own manufacture. If the articles with which they can supply their countrymen, either entirely or in part, be dearer than similar articles which could be imported, yet according to them it is always for the national benefit that their countrymen should be obliged to buy from them. With respect to other articles, indeed, which *they* are to purchase, the case seldom appears quite so clear to them. A protecting duty on English coals would not probably be a measure of such evident national advantage, in the eyes of the Dublin manufacturers, as a protecting duty on English woollens, though it is much more likely that Ireland has a sufficiency of coals, than that she has a sufficiency of woollens for her own

own consumption. But as no man ever has been hardy enough to assert that foreign trade should be entirely confined to export only ; as the utmost which the most arbitrary and self-sufficient director of the course of commerce has asserted is, that there are certain cases, in which we ought to give a compulsory preference to certain of our own manufactures or productions ; it behoves us at least to consider the nature of the case before we decide it to be one of those in which we ought to cramp the natural liberty of our fellow subjects. With respect to woollens, you must perceive that it cannot be the universal wisdom of all the nations of the earth to prevent their import. You hear a great deal of those countries which do prevent such an import, and the epithet of wise is very liberally bestowed upon them ; but you do not hear a word of those nations that permit it ; and as England does export a very considerable quantity besides what she sends to us, it is evident that the wisdom of *some* nations induces them to deal with her. It is nonsense to talk of protecting duties as a general principle ; the utmost that can be said of them is, that *there are cases* in which they may be expedient. I am far from admitting that principle,

ciple, but I believe I cannot be denied another principle, that there are cases in which they may *not* be expedient ; that there may be countries so circumstanced, that an import of woollens *ought* to be admitted. Suppose for a moment, that the province of Ulster were insulated and made a nation by itself, would you not think it madness to prohibit the import of woollens into the *Island of Ulster*, from some of the neighbouring countries of England, Leinster, Connaught, or Munster ? Unquestionably you would admit them ; you know very well you could not do without them ; and that you never could do without such an import, unless you were to convert to sheep walks a considerable part of those lands which are at present employed much better. You would be sensible, that it would be better to sell your linens and to buy the woollens in return ; that it would be better to buy the produce of ten acres of pasture with the produce of half an acre of flax, than to expel a numerous and virtuous set of men, to make room for a good many sheep and a few woollen manufacturers. I do not say that it would be so very absurd for the kingdom of Ireland to prohibit the import of woollens, as it

it would be for the separated province of Ulster, for the rest of the kingdom is not at present so populous. But what I have shewn you is enough to prove that the measure is not of *necessity* a wise one, nor applicable to *all* countries and situations. It is enough to shew, that you ought not of course to adopt it without any farther thought ; that you are to examine into the case before you adopt the principles ; and that you are neither to take the wisdom of it for granted, nor wholly to rely on those whose interest it is to deceive you.

B

C H A P₂

C H A P. II.

*Of the Effect of a Protecting DUTY ON
WOOLLENS.*

TO restrain the inhabitants of a free country, from the free use of their own property; to tell them you shall lay out the earnings of your labour, not in the manner which you please, but in the manner in which others shall think fit to direct you, is certainly in the power of the legislature; but it is one of the greatest and boldest exertions of that power, that ever a free nation can submit to.—It may sometimes be wise and necessary; but the cases in which it can be so, are extremely few, and the various and complicated circumstances of those cases should be weighed with the most deliberate caution---I know of no commercial writer who has favoured the principle of directing the course of trade by compulsory duties, who has given us a code of general rules, by which we

we should decide in what cases we ought to adopt such a system, and in what cases to deviate from it.

INDEED it would be impossible for such writers to do so with any tolerable precision ; for every case has its peculiar circumstances : The quantity of learning applicable to the subject should be almost infinite, and the precision of mind which is requisite to decide universally on the subject, is hardly to be found in human nature.---Yet on this great and comprehensive question, every man concerned in any trade thinks himself perfectly competent to decide, so far as concerns his own manufacture---That his trade should be peculiarly favoured, is always the clearest point in the world, and if it thrives extremely ill, that is, if it be very unprofitable, and very unfit for his country, then it is (in his mind) the more wise and necessary to favour it. It is a new thing, however, for other persons to be equally clamorous for a diminution of their liberty, and for a tax upon their consumption. It seems a little extraordinary for a man to cry out, “ I am very ill used by my governors. When I have earned a little mo-

ney, I am not forced by the legislature to lay it out in the manner they think proper, but may use it as I like. If I want a coat, I may buy it from a man who will sell it to me cheap, instead of being forced to go to my countryman, who has not cloth enough to supply me, and who sells it dearer---I am almost as much oppressed as if I lived in a free port, where I could get every thing I want on the cheapest terms"---Such, however, is the complaint of those who join the cry of the woollen-manufacturers. A wise legislature will consider a few points before they yield to it---They will consider that cloaths are a necessary of life---They will consider whether (at present) the manufacturers of woollens can supply their countrymen with that necessary---They will consider whether, they (hereafter) may be able to supply it without injury to the general prosperity of the country---They will consider whether the distresses of the woollen manufacturers be real, or pretended--They will consider whether the benefit conferred on them, be equal to the injury done to others who have an equal claim to their regard. If you will look at the accounts in the appendix, you will

will find that the woollens imported for the consumption of Ireland, are :

	Y A R D S.
The year ending March 1783, old drapery,	371,871
New ditto,	420,415
	S T O N E S.
That the whole quantity of wool exported is,	2063
That the whole quantity of worsted and bay yarn exported is,	65,577

Now, as the whole of the wool, woollen, and worsted which we do not manufacture at home, is utterly inadequate to the making the quantity of drapery which we consume, it is obvious that a tax upon foreign drapery must have one of the three following effects--- either it must be smuggled into Ireland, or, it must be imported, and the duty paid ; or the quantity of wool in Ireland must be increased 'till it be sufficient for our own consumption.

Now, if I prove to you that every one of these consequences will be pernicious to the nation at large, and peculiarly injurious to you—If I show you that the benefit accruing to the woollen manufacturer will be much less than

than the quantum of the general injury to others equally meritorious; may I hope, that you will not be led away by men who talk of the detestable policy of setting the North against the South, but who are themselves setting the interests of a few against the general good of the nation?

First, If drapery be smuggled into Ireland, so far as protecting duties will have this effect, they will increase the price of cloathing to you, to the farmer, and in short to every man in Ireland, in proportion to the risque which the smugglers shall run; the woollen manufacturer will indeed be benefited, because he will be enabled to raise his price--- He will indeed be enabled to raise it considerably; for as in this case there will not be a sufficient quantity of Irish goods to supply our market, the dealers in those goods will have a monopoly of a necessary article, except so far as that monopoly will be controuled, and their prices kept down by the smuggled import. You know very well that when corn is scarce the prices rise extremely; you must be equally sensible that if cloth be scarce, the price of cloth will rise enormously,

mously. An import of corn in times of scarcity lowers its price. An import of smuggled cloth will in like manner lower the price of cloth---But to what degree will it lower that price? certainly it will not reduce it any lower than to such a price as will pay the smuggler for his risque, and also will leave him a profit. Therefore the benefit to the dealers in woollen will not be equal to the quantum of the injury done to you, and to the rest of the people of Ireland; for *they* will RECEIVE this advanced price only on what they SELL, but you will *pay* this advanced price not only on what you *buy* from them, but on the rest of the woollens which you will consume, and which will be smuggled---besides the supposed *national* benefit which is to accrue from protecting duties, is to arise solely from the *additional* quantity of woollens which Ireland will manufacture in consequence of them. You know very well that a great quantity is manufactured without these duties; you know also, that those who have entered into that trade have done it by choice, and not by compulsion; in short, they have entered into it from the same motives that have made you and every other tradesman choose the trade they follow---from motives

of

of interest---You know also, that instead of a new **DISCOURAGEMENT**, they have met with a new encouragement in their trade,—free export, and an operating export.

WHAT reason is there then that they should be allowed to enhance the price of such wool-lens as they now find it their interest to manufacture *without* any new assistance ? To tax one set of industrious men for the benefit of another, seems to be not extremely fair. But for the sake of a small addition to the quantity which they manufacture, to make you pay an advanced price for not only what they will bring to market in *consequence* of a protecting duty, but for what they bring to market *without* that artificial aid; nay, to make you pay an advanced price for what might be made in another country and smuggled, seems to me to be the most flagrant injustice, and the most palpable nonsense that ever was offered to men in their senses.

THERE are some trades so circumstanced that if a tax be laid on the necessaries used by those who follow them, or if their price be enhanced in any other manner, which is the

the same thing in effect, the burden will fall ultimately on the consumer of their labour, and the profits and prosperity of the trade itself will not be materially affected. If the necessaries consumed by tailors, for instance, were to be taxed, the trade of making cloaths would still go on; we cannot do without tailors to make our cloaths, and we could not get persons to follow that trade, unless they were enabled to live by it as well as usual: but shew me another trade, the prosperity of which depends upon foreign demand; such is that trade which you follow. If the cloaths or other necessaries consumed by linen manufacturers be enhanced in price, you cannot raise the price of your labour or of your commodity. Foreigners will not buy from you, unless you sell as cheap as your foreign competitors, who will not be at all affected by the price of cloth in Ireland, nor in the least consider that you cannot earn the price of a suit of cloaths in as short a time as you used to do. If the price therefore of cloaths and of other necessaries be increased, the linen manufacture will proportionably decline, and the strength, population, and welfare of the country will decline along with it.

BEFORE I quit this part of my subject, I must observe, that the consequence of protecting duties will be, that the cloths of England *will* be smuggled into Ireland; they are so at present, even at the low duties. On this head the people of Belfast can give you some, and the people of Newry a great deal of information; and those who are well situated for that illicit trade, and who profit by it at present, will profit still more when the duties shall be raised; accordingly I have observed some of them already shew a violent degree of patriotism in favour of this measure. You are not such novices as not to know that an increase of duty, that is, of temptation, will increase an illicit trade; a trade too in an article that is far from bulky, and that is brought from a country within a few hours sail of you. Two ships could import all the woollens which Ireland usually consumes, in twelve months. Woollens will be imported undoubtedly, but that you will not get them as cheap as you do at present, is evident from this; that under the present duties merchants find it generally, though not universally, more for their interest to pay than run the risk of evading them;

them ; the price, therefore, which you must pay for them when smuggled, will be greater than that which you now pay, in consequence of the present duties, and of the present state of your woollen trade. An advanced price upon all the woollens we shall use, without the acquisition of an exclusive domestic manufacture, appears to me to be the most probable effects of prohibitory duties ; and as a duty on coarse woollens will bear a nearer proportion to their value than the same duty on fine cloths, it is not improbable that our regulations will be the most frequently evaded in the case of that part of the woollen manufacture, which we are the most desirous to protect. I wish those persons who are ready to sacrifice so much of the interest of all other trades to the woollen manufacture, and who in negotiation with England, would perhaps sacrifice somewhat to obtain a protecting duty, would consider this argument ; with the Dublin manufacturers, indeed, it will have but little weight ; for whether we shall force an extensive woollen trade or not, a protecting duty will answer one end to them ; that of enabling them to raise the price of what they sell to their countrymen.

SECONDLY, Or we shall import from England, paying the protecting duty. If that duty be laid as high as is desired, this event will not happen ; if lower, then you will pay an enhanced price proportionable to the duty ; that is, a protecting duty will be injurious to you, in proportion to the quantity of the impost. It is observable, that a duty on coarse woollens, is what is *the most* insisted upon ; that is, a tax on a necessary is more sought than a tax on a luxury.

THIRDLY, Or the quantity of cloathing wool in Ireland will be encreased so as to be sufficient for the consumption of the inhabitants. On the possibility of the utility of this the argument principally turns. The whole jargon of false commercial principles, the whole art of mutilated evidence, the whole force of miscalculation is directed to this part of the subject.

THAT no absurdity should be wanting in the discussion of this question, the favourers of protecting duties do not propose any general means whereby the wool of the country should be encreased, nor any expedient by which you should be preserved from nakedness. All that happy project be accomplished ; but

but you are at once to submit to a prohibition before you can possibly expect a sufficient domestic supply. To what degree this would enhance the price of an article, which in this climate is not a superfluity, must in a great measure depend upon the degree to which the smuggler can evade the law. But you are told that the time will come, in which our black bogs will be converted into sheep walks, your country will in the end grow rich, and you will have coats to wear; now, if it were proposed to you to submit to a tax upon linens, the product thereof to be distributed as a bounty amongst the woollen manufacturers, until the quantity of woollen should become sufficient for the consumption of Ireland, probably you would not think the proposition extremely reasonable. But it would be demonstrably more reasonable and less burdensome than protecting duties. To tax the linens which you make, or to tax the necessaries which you buy with the price of those linens, would indeed be but *equally* burdensome, *provided* no more were levied from you in one way than in the other; but such a tax as I speak of, when distributed to them in the way of bounty, would only be paid on what they actually manufactured,

whereas

whereas a protecting duty would enhance the price not only of what they make, but of what shall be imported fraudulently or otherwise. Do yourselves the justice to consider under what circumstances they can desire either. If their manufacture tended more than yours to national wealth, if it tended more to population, or to virtuous industry, you might submit to it from patriotism. If their trade was more discouraged than yours, you might submit to it from justice—But what is the fact? You are to prevail upon them to buy your manufactures by a fair competition with foreign linens, by your superior skill and industry alone, without the aid of any protecting duty, and you are satisfied. They have already a small protecting duty, and they are dissatisfied.

THEY have a trade, the profits of which enable them to live in the capital where provisions are the dearest. You have a trade which enables you to live in the country. If a protecting duty were granted to you against them, they would not be materially injured; for they could be supplied with linens by you to any amount they could require. But there requires very little reasoning

ing to convince you, that 2400 stone of wool, if it were wrought by them into cloth, would be utterly insufficient for you. Here I have two arguments to encounter, and as far as I can, they shall have a fair and full discussion.

FIRST, They say that we have more cloathing wool, but it is smuggled away.

SECONDLY, They say our wool would speedily increase, so as to be sufficient for our home consumption.

THE first article is indeed but little relied upon ; it is neither supported by proof, nor probability. To smuggle wool out of England is indeed a common practice, and the existence of such a practice, is a proof of the inefficacy of the laws and revenue cutters to stop the natural course of trade. But in Ireland wool is three or four shillings per stone, on an average, dearer than it is in England ; now, this single circumstance must convince us, that to smuggle from Ireland cannot be profitable, therefore not a common practice. The arguments derived therefore from the illicit trade, tend to shew----not that the quantity of Irish wool is *more nearly equal* to what is necessary for our consumption, but that it is a

great

great deal farther from it, than what appears by those custom-house entries which I have stated.

I HAVE already given some reasons for my refusing any credit to their second argument, "That the quantity of Irish wool will speedily increase so as to be sufficient to cloath us.—A high duty, that is a greater temptation to an illicit import, will probably rather increase than diminish the efforts and skill of the smuggler—nor is it certain that an advanced price which will enable the woollen manufacturers to support their trade with less labour, sobriety, and invention than they do at present, will induce them to become at once more inventive, sober, and industrious. We are told, indeed, with a sort of triumph, that there was a time when Ireland had more than wool sufficient for her own consumption : It is very true, Ireland certainly was more a country of sheep, when it was less a country of men : eighty-six years ago we could both supply ourselves and spare somewhat for exportation. What was precisely the population of Ireland at that period, I have no authentic documents to instruct me; but probably it was not

not very much greater than in 1676, in which year the report of the council of trade, drawn up by Sir William Petty, stated the people of Ireland to be 1,100,000, the difference between the two periods is but 22 years; now, to argue that Ireland can produce wool enough or more than enough, when she had little more than a third of her present inhabitants, is to trifle with your understanding. The rapid progress of population under our linen and tillage system, is an argument that must speak to the understanding of every unprejudiced man. America alone has increased her numbers with greater rapidity, and America has hardly any woollen manufacture. I do not mean by this to insinuate that a woollen manufacture ought to be discouraged; no, that would be to reason like my opponents, who are perpetually appealing to the example of other countries which are differently circumstanced from our own. Every manufacture ought, in my mind, to take its natural course; but I cannot lament that my native country has thriven in such as are more favourable to population. The committee of Dublin manufacturers admit that an immediate demand for their goods will for a time raise the price of wool; let me add that

it will raise the price of wool for a long time, even until there be a sufficiency for our consumption ; let me add too, that it will raise the price of labour in the woollen fabrics. Let me make another addition, it will raise the price of corn. The land which your tilling laws have converted to agriculture, will be restored to pasturage by the price of wool being enhanced. Yet if you do not embrace with transport a system which will enhance the price of food and cloathing, you are to be deemed unfeeling men—and those who advise you not to destroy yourselves, are called enemies to their country.

WITH respect to you, these evils will be unmixed with any benefit whatsoever : to the landlords of the south and west of Ireland, I confess that the Dublin committee has held out a pretty strong inducement, an advanced price for wool is certainly of immediate advantage to them ; it is an advantage, however, that is attended with some inconveniences : Cloaths are a necessary of life, and to raise the price of a necessary is to raise the price of labour, without enabling the labourer to live better than he did before. Now, there is nothing so essential to the general

neral prosperity of a country, as that labour should be cheap ; we are unwilling to tax the primum of any manufacture ; labour may not improperly be called the primum of every mannfacture ; and it is amazing, how variously it is affected by raising the price of any necessary of life. The labourer must pay more for his coat ; but it does not end here, even with the labourer ; he sometimes employs a mason, that mason pays more for his coat than he used, that mason employs a taylor, who pays more for his coat than he used, that taylor employs a shoemaker, who pays more for his coat than he used ; thus the high price of one necessary article, acts and re-acts through every subdivision of labour, and of trade ; and the seller of wool repays back a part of his additional profit, in proportion as he employs the labour of any of his countrymen.

BUT it is alledged, that this benefit to the seller of wool, will be but temporary. I believe, indeed, that it will be temporary, but not for the reasons which are given. The manner in which it will operate, appears to be as follows : So far as the protecting duties

shall operate to the exclusion of English woollens, so far they will be an encouragement to withdraw land from tillage ; the scarcity of grain will again raise the value of tillage ground, and in consequence of that, the race of man will be again restored in many places to the culture of the fields. The southern and western farmer having his choice to apply his land in the manner most beneficial to him, will be directed by the comparative profit of the two modes of employing his ground : as long as the same quantity which is now employed to supply all our corn, and a part of our wool, shall be the only land which is to supply all our corn, and a greater part of our wool, so long the produce of that land will sell dear ; but let us reflect, that there is a great quantity of land in this kingdom employed in producing *neither* corn nor wool, but is appropriated to the maintenance of the linen manufacture, and why ? Because that appropriation of such land is found more beneficial to the occupier. Make corn and wool dearer, and the linen-weaver, who as I have observed, cannot raise his price in return, will find his trade less beneficial than it is, and the comparative profit of appro-

appropriating the land to the support of that trade, in preference to the supplying it to wool or corn, will diminish. The final effect, therefore, of protecting duties, will be to diminish the linen manufacture, and as soon as that shall be done, the scarcity of wool and of corn will be no more, and the prices of these articles will fall to their natural level. I might here go into computation ; I might shew you what is the greatest redundancy of corn (proved by the account of export) that this country has ever experienced ; and I might prove to you, that an additional quantity of wool sufficient for our consumption, could not be produced from three times as much land as that corn grew upon, of course that such wool could not be produced without a loss of a more profitable and essential article ; but in my mind, a thousand computations are not worth the plain good sense of a few of Mr. Adam Smith's principles, and my belief is, that *in the end* it would be the linen, and not the corn which would be diminished. The swarms of emigrants would be from the northern hive, from whence indeed there have been too many under circumstances less unfavourable to their trade, than those which

which are now proposed by the sages of Dublin. Should I be asked, do I think the kingdom of Ireland to be unable to produce more linen, more corn, and more wool than it does? I answer, that I believe it is able. I believe that two millions of money judiciously applied to the improvement of our lands, would enable Ireland to do so. But as nations cannot encrease their capitals at pleasure, all that is in their power is to convert their capital to the best purposes. It is in the power of an injudicious law, to convert the land appropriated to tillage, or to the linen-manufacture, into sheep walks; but it is not in the power of law to create a capital to be applied to the improvement of our land. It can only change the application of the capital. To *prevent* the encrease of capital, we know, is indeed, in the power of men who deter foreigners from settling amongst us, by their contempt of the laws, their invasion of the liberties of their fellow subjects, and their endeavours to excite sedition.

If it can ever be wise to force trade out of its natural course, and to give a compulsory preference to one application of the national capital

capital over another, I should rather recommend the giving it to tillage and to linens, than to a woollen manufacture. Linens certainly can give employment to more men out of the same quantity of land, more in number, scattered more over the face of the country ; the linen manufacturers contribute more to the general good, they contribute also more to the general strength, and of course, to our defence and our liberty.

THE profit of the nation being but the aggregate of the profits of individuals, if we leave every man to find out what trade he is most likely to thrive by, we shall probably act with more wisdom, and grow a richer nation in a short time, than if we burden one trade for the sake of another ; but to burden those trades which encourage population *the most*, for the sake of those which contribute to it *the least*, is perhaps the greatest absurdity that ever was proposed to men of common sense.

I HAVE already shewn you how protecting duties will tend to the encrease of sheep, of course to the diminution of the land applied to corn ; let me here observe to you how differently

differently men reason in other mens cases and in their own : Whenever they find there is an apparent scarcity of corn, and very often when there is no such apparent scarcity, they are clamorous on import; they then totally forget that a protecting duty on foreign corn is the means to cause a sufficient supply to be raised at home, yet corn is perhaps the only article on which there ought to be a protecting duty ; not that I controvert Mr. Adam Smith's position, “ That if all the nations of the earth would allow the corn trade to be free, corn would on an average be cheaper than it is, but for the following reas ons :

BECAUSE it is the policy of other nations frequently to stop the export of corn, whenever there has been a bad crop, it is therefore necessary for us to provide a domestic redundancy, otherwise we should be unable in times of scarcity to procure any supply at all.

BUT woollens we can get at all times.

SECONDLY, Because imported corn pays an heavy freight which must fall upon the consumer.

BUT

BUT an hundred and fifty pounds worth of woollen can be imported at as little cost as twenty shillings worth of corn.

THIRDLY, Because agriculture produces a numerous, hardy, and virtuous race of men.

BUT a woollen manufacture produces sheep and the patriots of the Coombe and Poddle.

FOURTHLY, If we grant a protecting duty on foreign corn when it is cheap, we in return lay a prohibition on the export of corn when we have not enough for our own consumption.

BUT a protecting duty on the import of woollens is required to be laid *at all times*; nay, it is asked when we have *not* a sufficiency of wool for our own consumption; that is, under the very circumstances in which we *admit* foreign corn, instead of prohibiting it, and under which we prevent the export of our own corn, instead of encouraging it by bounty.

C H A P. III.

Of the supposed distress of the woollen manufacturers.

IF the distresses of any set of men be pretended ; the result of idleness ; or the art of their employers, who wish to obtain a monopoly against their fellow subjects ; we must naturally expect to see itinerant committees that are paid to beg ; an unremitting war of paragraphs ; aggregate meetings attended by few except public incendiaries, and interested men who interrupt all freedom of debate, and prevent all fair discussion of the subject ; a vast deal of artful clamour, complaints of poverty and presents of plate, pathetic appeals to our humanity, and outrages that are shocking to human nature.

If the distress be real, we shall be able to see the causes of it, in the circumstances of the trade ; now, what are the circumstances ?
The

The manufacture of old drapery seems to have advanced nearly as far as the quantity of wool in the nation will permit it; for of cloathing wool we export but 2400 stones annually: now, whether these 2400 stones be the thousandth part or the five hundredth part of the wool of Ireland, is not very well worth computation. It is clear that we undersell the English in our own markets within a very trifle, as far as we have cloathing wool to work up.

Old Drapery exported.

		YARDS.
Years ending March	1779	Nil.
	1780	494
	1781	3740
	1782	4633
	1783	40,389

We see here an operating export rapidly encreasing, and we see that as far as 40,389 yards we can contend in foreign markets, when we must pay freight and commission as well as our competitors; yet they tell us, that we cannot contend with them in Ireland where our competitors pay these expences,

we do not. If they tell us that our manufacturers are undone because wool is dear in Ireland, I answer, the dearness is not the cause of their distress, but the effects of their prosperity. The price of cloathing wool is not high on account of the demand for it from England, for it is cheaper in England than in Ireland ; it is caused by the competition of the Irish buyers, who never can give an higher price than the profit of their manufacture enables them to do. That we export 2400 stones is the confutation of this argument, for so small a quantity as that may be of use in working some particular fabrics, but our exporting no more wool than that pittance is a confirmation of what I say, for if there were not a better demand for it in Ireland than in England, we should send them a great deal more.

Of the new drapery, of the decrease whereof Mr. Benjamin Haughton complains, the increase is still more evident, and it is natural that it should be so, because we have there more materials to work upon, and we see there more evidently the effects of the free trade.

New Drapery exported.

YARDS.
Nil.
1779 - - - 8653
1780 - - - 2 ² 6,859
1781 - - - 336,607
1782 - - - 538,061
1783 - - -

WE see also the export of bay yarn decreasing without a protecting duty, because the Irish manufacturer finds it more his interest to avail himself of the pre-emption of that article, that is, because his trade is encreasing.

THE export of bay yarn is now no more than what follows :

	Stones	lb.
Years ending } 1782 83,821 8		
March } 1783 66,677 —		

WHEN Mr. Haughton was asked, what will be the produce of the average quantity of bay yarn exported from this country if wrought up here into piece goods; and what number of hands would it employ?

HE answered, the quantity of bay yarn annually exported from this kingdom, on an average of seven years, ending March 25,

1770, amounted to 142,890 great stones, &c.

IT is not my wish to comment on the nature of Mr. Haughton's answer, nor his reasons for chusing the year 1770 rather than the year 1783; so far as his answer gives us a strong fact it is worth recording; the average export of bay yarn to the year 1770, he tells us was 142,890 stones,

The average of seven years ending 1783 was	}	66,670 stones.
So it decreased		74,220 stones.

Do you wish for farther proofs of the *encrease* of their manufacture, whose *decline* is so deeply lamented? I will give you then one more; I will take Mr. Haughton's year 1770. In that year we imported 462,499 yards, and we had then no power to export; but in the *calamitous* year 1783, we imported but 420,415 yards, though we in the same year, 1783, spared to foreign countries an export of 538,061, a quantity greater than the whole import at either period. To talk of the decline of the manufacture after such facts as these, is to insult your understanding; it is to suppose you factious enough to take up any question that may promote discontents, and

and too indolent to make any enquiry into the *truth* of what is offered to you.

IT is but about four years since we have availed ourselves of a free export of woollens. Now, as the apprenticeship to a woollen weaver usually takes up more than four years, there can have entered into that trade very few more than those who made it their choice when it was under more unfavourable circumstances than it is at present. The same men who, without compulsion, made choice of that trade when it was oppressed, are almost the only ones to carry it on now that it has an encouragement. Can men of common sense be made to believe that want of employment is the peculiar grievance of that trade, where there is an encrease of work done without an encrease of the workmen to do it?

You see by the facts I have stated, that they can contend in foreign countries with those competitors who, if you believe themselves, are able to beat them in this domestic market; you see that they are gaining yearly upon those foreign competitors, though they themselves live in the most unfit place in the kingdom for any manufacture—in the

metro-

metropolis—in the seat of sloth—drunkenness—faction, and dear provisions—yet even there they can encrease their trade; so very favourably is it circumstanced, and so much has the free trade availed them.

WERE they obliged to disperse themselves into distant provinces, as you are, I should indeed believe in their distress, but a monopoly against you would not be the remedy I should propose for it. They talk of emigrating to America—How many of them have emigrated to Prosperous—what authentic accounts have you of these formidable emigrations?—None—The emigrants have been, in general, more valuable subjects, linen, not woollen manufacturers, the men against whom the monopoly is to be, not those in whose favour it is demanded.

C H A P. IV.

Of Commercial Maxims.

IT is not necessary for the mass of the people to have their heads filled with good commercial maxims—for without any such systematical knowledge a nation may flourish, if it will but leave trade to itself. The profit of the nation being but the aggregate of the profits of individuals, and the encrease of national wealth being but the aggregate of what is saved by individuals, we may be pretty confident that men when left to their own judgment, will prefer and follow those trades which conduce the most to the national wealth; for they will choose those which will enable them to make the greatest earnings, and to lay by the greatest savings.—If trade be left at liberty, the consumer will, from free import and from the fair competition of those he is to buy from, be enabled to obtain whatever he wants on the cheapest terms; the gentleman will get more in exchange for the rent

of his land, the mechanic will get more in exchange for the price of his labour, than he could do if he were restrained by law from going to the cheapest vender. Strong incitements it must be owned to the gentleman to live at home, and to the mechanic to be industrious.—In this case, if the manufacturer will have no monopoly against any of his countrymen, neither will any of them have a monopoly against him, every thing will be sold as cheaply as either the country itself, or any other country can supply it; and no part of any man's profit will be a tax upon his neighbour; to what degree a country which enjoyed a fertile soil and a free constitution, and which was less taxed than any of its neighbours, might flourish under such a commerce, is a question which we cannot resolve from *experience*, for we know of no country where the experiment has been fairly tried.—Often to gratify a particular set of men, more frequently to distress some neighbouring state the commerce of every country, I know of has in some instances been restrained. I know of no country, however, where it has been confined either universally or impartially, nor of any general and unvaried rule of self-restraint which any nation has adopted. There

is

is no code more various or more vague than that code of commercial maxims which has been substituted in the place of this simple rule—leave trade to direct itself.

BUT a set of false commercial maxims, or a misapplication of the truest, is fatal indeed—to such a country as *this*, *peculiarly* fatal—for as we have but little capital, it is very important that we should not misapply the little we have—And as we have a free trade, the best applications of that capital are in our power, if we do not prevent them by our laws.—There is no maxim more generally received than this, that it is wise for a nation to work up its own raw materials—Even this maxim is not universally true, and the degree to which it may be true or false depends on the state of the country. If a manufacturer goes to America, he finds it his interest to quit his trade, and betake himself to the culture of the earth, whereby he can earn 2*s.* 6*d.* by the day.

IN the present state of America, therefore, labour can be better applied than to manufactures; perhaps this may be the case even in an European country. Naples exports silk

and buys silk stockings from England; are we to conclude from thence that it would be wise to force the industry of the Neapolitans into the manufacture of silk stockings? Perhaps it would not; perhaps there may be a still better mode of applying it. I have seen a letter of Sir William Hamilton's published, which tells us, that the finest land in that kingdom, and as fine perhaps as any in the world, does not produce five shillings per acre; but that if there were hands to gather the silk only, it would produce five pounds; perhaps, therefore, that country has not arrived to that state in which it ought to work up its own raw materials; it ought first to be able to gather them in. I only say this to shew you that the maxim may not be universally true. In a country where the land has been cleared and is tolerably improved, the relative profit of agriculture diminishes, and the relative profit of manufacture increases; thus the actual state of a country (if it be free) naturally directs the labour of man to what ever is most fit for that state, and most conducive to its progress towards a better one. I am very happy to find that Ireland has passed the first, and has arrived at the second stage of improvement. Manufactures here

here are profitable. It is right that we should work up *our* raw wool, and that it is so, is proved from this, that we *do* work up our raw wool without the aid of a protecting duty. With respect to us, therefore, the commercial maxim, *work up your raw materials*, is in this instance true; but mark the error which follows, and the gross *misapplication* of this true maxim. Because we ought to work up the wool which we *have*, they say we ought to extend the manufacture farther; that is, we ought to work up the wool which we have *not*. They say wool is a native commodity *natural* to this country. Now, the *additional* quantity of wool which we should grow in consequence of protecting duties, would be a *forced* and not a *natural* product, in the present improved state of the country. To weave the wool which we have in our present state of agriculture, and to force us back from that state of agriculture, are as different things as to cut turf on our bogs would be, from making bogs in order to cut turf.

FROM the quantity of wool which we once had, it was not a bad speculation to think we should

should now have a great manufacture of woollens. I am glad to find by an enquiry into the fact, that we imperceptibly have passed by that state of *incultivation*. I am informed that fifteen acres of sheep walk will produce wool enough to employ a weaver twelve months : Compute the number of persons to whom fifteen acres of tillage land will give food and employment ; compute the still greater number to whom fifteen acres of flax will give employment, and you will not lament that Ireland produces less wool than it used to do.

I KNOW that many superficial reasoners will be surprised at this doctrine : They will ask, is not England more advanced in wealth and population than Ireland, and has not England an immense woollen manufacture ? They will tell you of the populousness of her cloathing towns, and of the Riches which they earn and disseminate. I answer, that it is very true, England has a prodigious number of sheep, perhaps, as Mr. Young computes, above twenty millions; that England is better adapted to sheep than Ireland, appears from this, that though our wool is dearer than theirs by about four shillings the stone,

yet

yet that country has proportionably to its size more sheep than this ; but if it be true that a part of England be more peopled, it is also true that a very considerable part is less peopled than Ireland. From a free and prosperous commerce, from a thousand advantages long possessed by her, and but recently acquired by us, she exhibits in many parts a scene of wealth and population, which for years we cannot expect to attain to. In the midst of those scenes she exhibits *more* waste lands than Ireland ; if she did not, the population of England would be twelve instead of six millions ; and if it contains no more than six millions, as we see that so many parts of it are amazingly populous, we must be convinced that the other parts are extremely defective in population. Incapable of arriving at once to her wealth and improvement, let us not think her wastes and her defects the proper objects of our envy or imitation. As to her cloathing towns, if the produce of 200,000 acres be all manufactured in one place, that place will be thriving and populous, and so will the immediate neighbourhood of it ; but unless we compute how many acres of the country may be depopulated to furnish that town with wool, our reasonings must be utterly inconclusive. It is the way with every favourer of every

every manufacture to fall into this general error or imposition, they always compute what is gained, but they never compute what is lost by it: They will tell you of the number of hands which the application of a part of our capital to that trade will employ, but they are totally silent as to those whom the subtraction of that capital from other trades will deprive of employment.

As to the minufature of Spanish wool, the raw material is not of our own growth, and there is no general prepossession in its favour; there is no reason upon earth why that trade should be forced in preference to any other. In the course of things and without force it will prosper to a certain degree. It is not so likely to prosper here as in England because we are not so far advanced. The lands of Ireland are so unimproved, that it has been computed that eighty millions would scarcely bring them to the state of the cultivated parts of England. The profits of improving land in Ireland, though less than in America are yet so great, that fifteen per cent for ever has been realized by a judicious application of money to the improvement of the foil. Under these circumstances a very small proportion

portion of our wealth is likely to be applied to the manufacture of a foreign material, and certainly we ought not to divert our money from the best of all applications, and the most lasting of all improvements. When peace and commerce shall open a greater intercourse with Spain, when the spirit of public sedition and ignorant outrage shall no longer deter foreigners from settling in a country to which the cheapness of labour would invite them, if the bad execution of the laws did not keep them away, then and not till then, the manufacture of Spanish wool will become considerable. In the whole code of commercial principles, there is not one which would tend to enrich this nation so much as a stability in the public mind; a perfect security of persons and property from the attacks of the populace, and a strict execution of the laws. A cruel and lawless commonalty, and a conniving magistracy will never make us a thriving nation; men of property will be deterred from settling in the seat of lawless barbarism, and feeble and unmeaning sedition.—Enemies to every wise regulation in favour of agriculture, and ready to sacrifice the linen manufacture, the populace of Dublin are scarcely more enemies to you than to themselves;

it is in spite of them that they have laws to protect their persons ; it is in spite of them that their city is increased and ornamented ; it is in spite of them that their city is paved, it is in spite of them that they have bread to eat. But I am not writing a political but a commercial essay, an essay on a subject requiring accurate argument and a thorough knowledge of facts. If you will be at the trouble of thinking upon it, I am convinced you will think justly, but if you will make an opposition question of every commercial subject, if you will take up every thing which the most ignorant of mankind will propose to you, I must lament that a nation in such a temper is on the eve of a commercial arrangement, with a cool and knowing people : You will then be unquestionably injured in the course of that transaction. What a state of things is this ? That the men who are to support your interest, are to be over-borne by the ignorant clamor of those who are ready to sacrifice you, that their nonsense is to pass for the sense of the nation, and that you think it virtuous and popular to become accessory by your silence to your own ruin.

ANOTHER false and dangerous commercial maxim is this—to follow the example of another nation because that nation has thriven. That other nation may have thriven in spite, and not because of the conduct which is proposed to our imitation, or it may have thriven because it was circumstanced in a manner different from, or opposite to, our own, yet there are men who think it excellent reasoning to say, “ Adopt protecting duties *after the example of the wisest nations*; England has protecting duties and England is rich; therefore if you have a mind to be rich, adopt protecting duties.” One might just as well say, “ Philip of Macedon was a great man and wanted an eye, therefore if you have a mind to be a great man put out one of your eyes.”

WHEN England imposed protecting duties, she was in a situation the reverse of ours: So far from not having wool enough for her own consumption, it was the greatest article of her export; for ages she sent it abroad, it was the article with which she usually paid her forces abroad; if protecting duties be the causes of her improvement, they are causes of rather slow operation: They were imposed in the reign of Edward III. and in the reign

of Elizabeth, England was not as commercial nor as manufacturing a country as Ireland is at this day. If I were to be guided by example, (which I am not, for we never know all the circumstances of the case) I should decide against protecting duties : America, against whom they were laid, has thriven faster than England, in whose favour they were enacted. Ireland within thirty years, has thriven faster than England.

THE countries where manufactures have been kept back, have thriven faster than those where they have been forced forward ; the countries who have preferred agriculture to manufactures, have received the most rapid, as well as the most permanent of all improvements ; the amelioration of their soil, and the population of it ; the population of it by an hardy and industrious race of men, the improvers and defenders of this country.

Sic fortis Etruria crevit,
Scilicet et rerum facta est pulcherrima
Roma.

THE country which has thriven the least of any in modern Europe is Denmark, which has

has adopted this policy with the most devoted partiality. When we see the most ignorant of mankind, dogmatically deciding on the nicest questions of commerce, let us not be surprised if statesmen and ministers have indulged some portion of this vanity: Almost every country has fettered its own commerce, but whether they have shewn more judgment in those instances where they have bound it, than those in which they have left it free, is a question which neither every weaver, nor every young gentleman of parts is competent to determine. France, after the experience of years, begins to doubt the infallibility of the great Colbert, the once admired patron of the restrictive system of commerce. Perhaps Ireland may discover some errors in the committee of Dublin manufacturers, who have taken up this subject with so much judgment and impartiality, and who have decided it in their own favour.

WE are very liable to mistake the motives upon which men in power have laid duties upon the import of foreign goods: We see England prohibiting the silks of France, and France prohibiting the woollens of England. By this means each country pays more for its cloaths than otherwise it would have done, and it is

very probable that the trade and industry of each country is diminished by these mutual ill-offices ; but are we of course to ascribe this to either the wisdom or the folly of these two nations ? no, their mutual animosity will account for it much better.

THE jealous spirit of British commerce, has often induced that nation to forget that her capital, though immense, was not unlimited. By her navigation act, by her various bounties, and by her various restrictions, she seems to have had a hope of monopolizing every branch of commerce ; but she has found that as she gained one branch, she lost some other. If the system she has pursued has been universally wise, it ought to follow, that she not only should have a great commerce, but that she should have greater commerce in proportion to her capital than any nation upon earth. Ireland, on the other hand, ought to have less commerce in proportion to her little capital, than any nation we know of, for there is no country where trade has been suffered to make its own way with so little artificial assistance. You will stare, perhaps, when I assert that Ireland has more foreign trade, in proportion to her capital, than Great Britain.

THE commercial capital of Britain, never has, and I believe it hardly can be estimated, to be less than ten times as great as the capital of this country, of course the imports and exports of Britain ought to be ten times as much as those of Ireland. Now what is the fact? The exports of Britain, by the returns of her custom-house, are about twelve millions—her imports about nine millions—her clandestine trade I confess, has by some persons been estimated to be four millions—this is not proved, but allow it to be true, and if you will, suppose on the other hand that Ireland has no clandestine trade at all, yet even thus our exports amount not to a tenth, but to a fourth part of the exports of Britain, and our imports bear nearly the same proportion, a fourth. Should not this strong fact rather lead us to doubt the wisdom of the British system of forced encouragements and restrictions, than to adopt that part of such a system which the traders of Dublin propose to us? We sometimes remember, and we sometimes forget this principle, that if we force capital into one trade, we subtract from another. If we hear of an English Company undertaking to work a mine in Ireland, we are very glad of it; why are we so? Why do

do we not desire a law to confine the profits of that business to Irishmen? In this case we act as we ought, but if a manufacture is to be forced, then we totally forget the principle. We seem to think that the capital and hands which are forced into that trade, would otherwise have been useless and unemployed, never considering that this capital, and those hands, would of themselves go into that trade if it were as profitable as others, and that the advanced price which we force the consumer to pay, is a tax paid by Irishmen and not by strangers. I believe the most judicious amongst you are sensible that the export of your linens through England is a great advantage to you; were you in all instances forced to find a foreign market for them yourselves, then Ireland would be obliged to employ a part of that capital in foreign trade, which, under its present designation, sets a vast quantity of domestic industry in motion. To find ships, to make assortments, to seek foreign markets, and to bring back other goods in return is one mode of employing commercial capital, to spin, to weave, to bring linens to a near market, is another mode of employing it.

Is it not evident that the same capital cannot do both of these things to the same extent, to which it could effect one of them only? Commerce, when left to itself, adapts itself to the state of things, and to the interest of the community. An infant society finds it most profitable to clear its lands, and the ships of other countries take its raw products and bring to it the conveniences of life in return. A country that has made more progress begins to manufacture; when it goes on further it manufactures more, and it becomes the carrier of its own merchandize, more or less, according to the degree of the improvement. By the increase of wealth and the competition of its merchants, the profits of all these trades decline, and they become carriers for other nations. In every part of this progress, the immediate interest of the individual leads him to those employments which are suited to the actual state of the society. Next to the securities of persons and of property, from monarchs or from mobs, the great cause of residence, and the great source of improvement is cheapness; and can you doubt that a country in which all the productions of the world

would be sold at that price to which the freest competition would reduce them, would be the cheapest country in the world? I agree, therefore, with those who say that it would be unwise in Great Britain, if in resentment for our laying a duty on their favourite manufacture, she should lay a duty on our linens—But why would it be unwise? Because it would make an essential article to come dearer to themselves; that is, it would be unwise on the very same principles which would make it absurd in us to tax their woollens—But if it were judicious in us to force the trade of woollens, then it would be also judicious in England to force the trade of linens; her lands are certainly fit for the culture of flax, and a small tax on *your* manufacture would increase *their own*; let them but reason like the Dublin traders; let them but think it beneficial to make that at home which they can buy cheaper from strangers, and their policy must lead them to tax Irish linens; they will have the example of Ireland to imitate, and they will then have nothing like a compact with this country to restrain them.

THERE is not an argument made use of by the sagacious patriots of Dublin, that could not be used with equal force by an English linen manufacturer: He might tell his countrymen, if you thought there was any thing like a compact existing with Ireland, they themselves have declared it to be at an end, they have told us that we cannot resent their following our maxims; they have taxed our staple manufacture, woollens; certainly they will be too just to resent our following *their* maxims; let us tax their staple, let us protect our linen manufacture; it has been the practice of all wise nations to protect their manufactures; Ireland is a very wise nation, for whose opinions we ought to have the greatest respect; let us lay a protecting duty in imitation of her, and without doubt she will be extremely flattered by the compliment; if Ireland has been wise in doing this with respect to woollens, we shall be five times as wise in doing this with respect to linens, for the linens we shall exclude are worth five times as much as the woollens against which she has protected herself.

I REALLY do not see how I could answer this sort of reasoning, except by recurring

to those arguments which have so little weight with the citizens of Dublin. I hope and believe, however, that the legislature of England will not pay the opinions of those gentlemen a very implicit deference, for I think that the English demand for linens is very likely to encrease at this moment, unless we shall deem it advisable to put a stop to it. The trade from England to Germany was extremely encouraged by the monopoly of tobacco which England possessed; England has lost that monopoly. Some of the countries who used to take the linens of Ireland are likely to have a part of that tobacco trade, and to trade to Germany; it is impossible to foresee the course of commerce, but it is very likely that Germany will now rival Ireland in many of the linen markets abroad, and that Ireland will rival Germany more and more in the market of England; the English market is therefore likely both to encrease and become more necessary to us than ever.

ON the eve of a commercial arrangement, the wisdom or the errors of which will affect your latest posterity, two opposite systems are submitted to your judgment; the system ad-

adopted by the Dublin traders seems to be this—exclude from your market those manufactures of your sister country which she can make better and cheaper than you do, and force Ireland to make them for herself. The other is the system which I have submitted to you, a system, not of mutual exclusion, but of mutual admission of the manufactures of each other ; by this the inhabitants of each country will be supplied with every manufacture as cheaply as the skill and industry of either can make it. In our late corn act, we have made some advances to this system, and the more nearly we approach to it, the more I believe are both nations likely to be benefited. But if at so critical a time as this, you will adopt the absurdities of every interested man ; if you will call every thing patriotism that has the face of opposition, though it be injurious to both yourselves and your native country ; and if you will go and suffer martyrdom at the shrine of discontent, how is it possible to serve you ? If men support your interest both against clamour and outrage, will they not want some support from you ? If it be the wish of men in power to serve their country and to please it, they stand in a very awkward predicament, for the things which would

would serve this country are not asked for, and the things which are asked for would not serve the country. The object which has been fixed upon as the most worthy of our care, is a very minute as well as a very absurd one; that one thirtieth part of our imports would be struck off by adopting protecting duties on coarse woollens appears utterly improbable, when we consider the facility of the clandestine trade, and how much our *exports* may eventually be diminished by it, is a matter very difficult of computation: I mean how much they would be diminished exclusive of the consequences which would ensue if England were to adopt the same measure with respect to us, which we think it wise and not unkind to adopt with respect to her. They, indeed, may be more easily computed, they may be computed with the almost total destruction of the linen trade of Ireland; if we are to give any peculiar aid to a manufacture, which neither peculiarly wants nor merits it, let it be *by bounty*, for that will be only so much money thrown away; it may be paid by some tax on the luxuries of the rich, but a *protecting duty* is a tax on the necessities of the poor and the industrious.

THE commerce of the world is about to take a new direction. If in the proper arrangement we shall be guided by false principles, that direction will not be to Ireland ; if by true ones, we shall begin our career with very peculiar advantages indeed. The commercial system of other countries has been so confined and complicated by their own errors, by their listening to every clamour, by their partialities to particular sets of men, and particular branches of trade, that it is scarcely in their power to emancipate their commerce from the bondage to which they themselves have doomed it ; Ireland is still free to choose. We have indeed languished for want of capital, which would flow in upon us if we were less ostentatious of our discontents ; we have labour cheaper than other nations ; we can have foreign articles as cheap, if we do not prevent them by our own folly ; we have more coast, more rivers, fewer taxes and less expensive establishments than any nation of either our wealth or our magnitude. If any man controverts this, let him tell which is that other nation ? We have the protection of a great navy without paying a ship, the consequence of that more than foederal union with

with Great Britain, that new phænomenon in the world, by which we have the independence of a *free state* and the protected condition of a great empire; we have an undisputed claim to be *equally* considered in every treaty which that great empire shall make, without paying even an ambassador; we have equal access to settlements on the same terms with their proprietor, and could we expect it on better? On the same terms except in one particular, that we do not lay a stone to a fortress, to the military force which guards them, we are joint, but not separate contributors; We have political liberty perfect, we have civil liberty imperfect, you will say; but certainly as nearly perfect as any other country we know or have read of, and we have a geographical situation of whose advantages we have not yet made a sufficient trial; I do not mean by this to say, that we ought not to amend our constitution if we can truly do so, I am writing only on a commercial subject—on the means and on the probability of encreasing our wealth and industry; in that light it is fair to compare this country, not with an ideal country where every thing is supposed to be perfect, but with those with whom we are to deal, and who are either to be our customers or our competitors. On the other hand, we have some disadvan-

disadvantages—we have very little commercial knowledge, and are apt to make very sudden decisions on subjects which require much thought and knowledge; we are extremely fond of a restrictive system of commerce, and we would fain wrap our infant trade in swaddling cloths instead of suffering it to stretch itself at pleasure; we are not like England, divided into two great factions, each of which openly aspire to the administration, and is to be supported in its pretensions by its partizans and by its good conduct, but we are divided in a manner still more prejudicial to the fair discussion of any one subject, into factions called court and country; accordingly we take up every thing that is against the court with the zeal of partizans, rather than with the coolness of judges. Were we to judge between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox, we would decide impartially, but between court and country we scarcely look upon impartiality as a virtue, for though a court measure may be good, yet we think it hurts the cause of opposition to do it justice; accordingly if men clamour against the court, at the same time that they propose a measure for their own particular interests and against that of their country, we do not give it a fair

examination,' for we seem rather to seek for triumphs than advantages. If we thus suffer commercial questions to take the complexion of party, I cannot expect much good from our commercial arrangements ; it is but too likely that with great difficulty and some concessions we may obtain what may do some harm, and that England in order to satisfy us, may consent to something which will give us no lasting satisfaction.

APPENDIX.

A P P E N D I X.

An Account of the Quantity and Value of New and Old Drapery exported out of Ireland, for four Years, ending 25th March, 1783, each Year distinguished.

DRAPERY.

Years, ending 25th March,	New.		Value.		
	Years.	Yards.	£.	s.	d.
1780	8653	865	6	0	0
1781	286859	28685	18	0	0
1782	336607	33660	15	0	0
1783	538061	53806	2	0	0

DRAPERY.

Years, ending 25th March,	Old.		Value.		
	Years.	Yards.	£.	s.	d.
1780	494	164	13	4	
1781	3740	1246	13	4	
1782	4633	1544	6	8	
1783	40589	13529	13	4	

An Account of the Quanties and Value
of Old Drapery imported into this king-
dom from Great Britain from the ear-
liest Period to the 25th March, 1783,
distinguishing each Year.

Years, ending 25th December,

Years.	Drapery, Old.		
	Yards.	Value.	
		£.	s.
1698	11784 $\frac{1}{4}$	8838	3 9
1699	10569 $\frac{3}{4}$	7927	6 3
1700	12019 $\frac{1}{2}$	9014	12 6
1701	16086	12064	10 0
1702	19258	14443	10 0
1703	14599 $\frac{1}{4}$	10949	8 9
1704	10458 $\frac{3}{4}$	7844	1 3
1705	12008	1066	0 0
1706	5514 $\frac{1}{2}$	4135	17 6
1707	6459 $\frac{1}{2}$	4844	12 6

For the Quarter, ending 25th March,

1708	—		1400 $\frac{1}{2}$		1050	7	6
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Years, ending 25th March,

1709	—	5770 $\frac{1}{2}$	4327	17	6
1710	England	8165 $\frac{1}{2}$	6532	8	0
	Scotland	175	140	0	0
1711	England	10415 $\frac{1}{2}$	8332	8	0
	Scotland	4	3	4	0
1712	England	10518	8414	8	0
1713	England	11440	9152	0	0
	Scotland	152 $\frac{1}{2}$	122	16	0

1714

Years, ending 25th March,

Drapery, Old

Years.	Yards.	Value. £. s. d.
1714 England	11318 $\frac{1}{4}$	9054 12 9
1715 { England	15585 $\frac{1}{2}$	12468 8 0
1715 { Scotland	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	2 16 0
1716 England	17094 $\frac{1}{4}$	13675 8 0
1717 England	20570 $\frac{1}{4}$	10285 2 6
1718 { England	21930 $\frac{3}{4}$	10965 7 6
1718 { Scotland	16	8 0 0
1719 { England	18395 $\frac{1}{2}$	9197 15 0
1719 { Scotland	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	5 5 0
1720 England	22833	17124 15 0
1721 { England	20827 $\frac{1}{4}$	15620 8 9
1721 { Scotland	27 $\frac{1}{2}$	20 12 6
1722 { England	12468 $\frac{1}{4}$	9351 3 9
1722 { Scotland	24	18 0 0
1723 England	17194 $\frac{1}{2}$	12895 17 6
1724 England	24934 $\frac{3}{4}$	18738 11 3
1725 { England	20655 $\frac{3}{4}$	15499 6 3
1725 { Scotland	25	18 15 0
1726 { England	29541 $\frac{1}{2}$	22155 15 0
1726 { Scotland	66	49 10 0
1727 England	20773	15579 15 0
1728 England	24631	18473 5 0
1729 { England	24399 $\frac{1}{4}$	18299 8 9
1729 { Scotland	13	9 15 0
1730 England	18776 $\frac{1}{4}$	14157 3 9
1731 { England	14501	10875 15 0
1731 { Scotland	12	9 0 0
1732 G. Britain	16097	11267 18 0
1733 Ditto	19083 $\frac{1}{2}$	13358 0 0
1734 Ditto	19640 $\frac{1}{4}$	14730 3 9
1735 Ditto	11197 $\frac{3}{4}$	8398 6 3
1736 Ditto	13361 $\frac{1}{2}$	9353 1 0
1737 Ditto	9626 $\frac{1}{2}$	6497 17 9

Years, ending 25th March,

Drapery, Old

Years.		Yards.	Value. £. s. d.
1738	G.Britain	16073	10715 6 8
1739	—	10524 $\frac{1}{4}$	7082 16 8
1740	—	16714 $\frac{1}{4}$	11421 8 1
1741	—	12918 $\frac{3}{4}$	8612 10 0
1742	—	22971 $\frac{1}{4}$ $\frac{1}{2}$	17228 8 9
1743	—	14582 $\frac{3}{4}$	10936 17 6
1744	—	20981 $\frac{1}{4}$	15735 18 9
1745	—	14420 $\frac{3}{4}$	10815 11 3
1746	—	23634	17725 10 0
1747	—	19508	13655 13 9
1748	—	44111 $\frac{1}{4}$	33083 8 9
1749	—	43647 $\frac{1}{4}$	30553 1 6
1750	—	56004 $\frac{1}{4}$	39202 19 6
1751	—	45565 $\frac{1}{4}$	31895 13 6
1752	—	74772 $\frac{1}{2}$	52340 15 0
1753	—	63715 $\frac{3}{4}$	44625 10 6
1754	—	100375 $\frac{1}{4}$	70262 13 6
1755	—	56883 $\frac{3}{4}$	39818 12 6
1756	—	73038 $\frac{3}{4}$	51127 2 6
1757	—	77763 $\frac{1}{4}$	54434 5 6
1758	—	114568 $\frac{1}{2}$	80197 19 0
1759	—	125865 $\frac{3}{4}$	88106 0 6
1760	—	161465 $\frac{1}{2}$	113025 17 0
1761	—	179044 $\frac{1}{2}$	125331 3 0
1762	—	197634 $\frac{1}{4}$	138343 19 6
1763	—	186029 $\frac{1}{4}$	130220 19 6
1764	—	220820 $\frac{3}{4}$	154574 10 6
1765	—	176161 $\frac{1}{2}$	123313 1 0
1766	—	197315 $\frac{1}{4}$	138120 13 6
1767	—	189832 $\frac{3}{4}$	132917 18 6
1768	—	198664 $\frac{1}{2}$	139065 3 0
1769	—	207117 $\frac{3}{4}$	144982 8 6

Years, ending 25th March,

Drapery, Old

Years.		Yards.	Value.		
			£.	s.	d.
1770	G.Britain	249666 $\frac{3}{4}$	174766	14	6
1771	—	217395	152176	10	0
1772	—	153566	107496	4	0
1773	—	210065 $\frac{1}{4}$	147045	13	6
1774	—	282277	197593	18	0
1775	—	281379 $\frac{1}{2}$	196965	13	0
1776	—	290215	203150	10	0
1777	—	381330	266931	0	0
1778	—	378077	264653	18	0
1779	—	176196	123337	4	0
1780	—	64346	45042	4	0
1781	—	326578	228604	12	0
1782	—	362824 $\frac{1}{4}$	253976	19	6
1783	England	371702 $\frac{1}{2}$	260191	15	0
	Scotlnd	169		118	6

An Account of the Quantities and Value
of New Drapery imported into this
Kingdom from Great Britain from the
earliest Period to the 25th March, 1783,
distinguishing each Year.

Years, ending 25th December,

Years.	Yards.	Drapery, New.		
		£.	s.	d.
1698 G. Britain	21294 $\frac{1}{2}$	1774	10	10
1699 ———	23486 $\frac{1}{4}$	1957	3	9
1700 ———	24522	2043	10	0
1701 ———	32791 $\frac{1}{2}$	4098	18	9
1702 ———	30675	3834	7	6
1703 ———	23296 $\frac{1}{4}$	2912	0	7 $\frac{1}{2}$
1704 ———	12099 $\frac{1}{2}$	1512	8	9
1705 ———	14539	1817	7	6
1706 ———	15308 $\frac{1}{2}$	1913	11	3
1707 { England	13305 $\frac{3}{4}$	1663	4	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
Scotlnd	56	7	0	0

For the Quarter, ending 25th March,

1708 ———	6118	764	15	0
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Years, ending 25th March,

1709 { England	12728 $\frac{3}{4}$	1272	17	6
Scotlnd	45	4	10	0
1710 { England	12165 $\frac{1}{2}$	1520	13	9
Scotlnd	28	3	10	0
1711 { England	14629 $\frac{3}{4}$	1828	14	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
Scotlnd	117	14	12	6
1712 { England	26185 $\frac{1}{2}$	3273	3	9
Scotlnd	120	15	0	0

1713

Years, ending 25th March,

Drapery, New

Years.

	Yards.	Value.		
		£.	s.	d.
1713	England	26270	3283	15 0
	Scotland	388	48	10 0
1714	England	35130 $\frac{1}{2}$	4391	6 3
	Scotland	38	4	15 0
1715	England	70924 $\frac{1}{2}$	8865	11 3
	Scotland	104	13	0 0
1716	England	50227 $\frac{1}{2}$	6278	8 9
	Scotland	38	4	15 0
1717	England	51570 $\frac{1}{4}$	6421	5 7 $\frac{1}{2}$
	Scotland	97	12	2 6
1718	England	74761 $\frac{3}{4}$	9345	4 4 $\frac{1}{2}$
	Scotland	71	8	17 6
1719	England	91670	11458	15 0
	Scotland	529 $\frac{1}{2}$	66	3 9
1720	England	79432 $\frac{1}{2}$	7943	5 0
	Scotland	120	12	0 0
1721	England	103042 $\frac{1}{2}$	10304	5 0
	Scotland	257	25	14 0
1722	England	71081 $\frac{1}{2}$	7108	3 0
	Scotland	81	8	2 0
1723	England	50259 $\frac{3}{4}$	5025	19 6
	Scotland	374	37	8 0
1724	England	55067 $\frac{1}{2}$	5506	15 0
	Scotland	175	17	10 0
1725	England	62118	6211	16 0
	Scotland	940	94	0 0
1726	England	61882	6188	4 0
	Scotland	375	37	10 0
1727	England	51247	5124	14 0
	Scotland	775 $\frac{1}{2}$	77	10 0
1728	England	40444 $\frac{1}{2}$	4044	9 0
	Scotland	757	75	14 0

Years, ending 25th March,

Drapery, New.

Years.

	Yards.	Value.		
		£.	s.	d.
1729	England	35521	3552	2 0
	Scotland	384	38	8 0
1730	England	18049	1804	18 0
	Scotland	830	83	12 0
1731	England	21030 $\frac{3}{4}$	2103	1 6
	Scotland	339	33	18 0
1732	G. Britain	14747	1474	14 0
1733	—	16752 $\frac{1}{4}$	2094	0 7 $\frac{1}{2}$
1734	—	20216 $\frac{3}{4}$	1542	3 9
1735	—	14428	1803	10 0
1736	—	16907 $\frac{3}{4}$	2536	3 3
1737	—	17569 $\frac{1}{2}$	2635	8 0
1738	—	29726 $\frac{1}{2}$	3715	16 3
1739	—	19540	2455	0 0
1740	—	39064	4883	0 0
1741	—	42504	4958	16 0
1742	—	53364 $\frac{1}{2}$	6225	17 2
1743	—	65880	7686	0 0
1744	—	77617	9055	6 4
1745	—	55185	6898	2 6
1746	—	76395	9549	7 6
1747	—	53193	6205	17 0
1748	—	83740 $\frac{1}{4}$	9769	13 11
1749	—	109284 $\frac{3}{8}$	12749	17 9
1750	—	137770 $\frac{1}{4}$	16073	3 11
1751	—	140028	17503	10 0
1752	—	192047	24005	17 6
1753	—	151407	18925	17 6
1754	—	220885 $\frac{1}{4}$	27610	14 4 $\frac{1}{2}$
1755	—	128923	16115	7 6
1756	—	116979 $\frac{1}{4}$	14622	8 1 $\frac{1}{2}$
1757	—	100211 $\frac{1}{2}$	12525	8 9
				1758

Years, ending 25th March,

Drapery, New.

Years.	G. Britain	Yards.	Value.		
			£.	s.	d.
1758		135939	16992	7	6
1759	—	151838	18979	15	0
1760	—	172125 $\frac{1}{4}$	21515	14	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
1761	—	188593 $\frac{1}{2}$	23574	3	9
1762	—	210560	26320	0	0
1763	—	213323	26665	7	6
1764	—	248062 $\frac{1}{2}$	31007	16	3
1765	—	239359 $\frac{1}{4}$	29919	18	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
1766	—	313216 $\frac{1}{4}$	39152	1	3
1767	—	325585 $\frac{1}{2}$	40698	3	9
1768	—	337558 $\frac{1}{4}$	42194	15	7 $\frac{1}{2}$
1769	—	394553 $\frac{1}{2}$	49319	3	9
1770	—	462499	57812	7	6
1771	—	362096	45262	0	0
1772	—	314703 $\frac{1}{2}$	39337	18	9
1773	—	387143	48392	17	6
1774	—	461407	57675	17	6
1775	—	465611 $\frac{3}{4}$	58201	9	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
1776	—	676485	84560	12	6
1777	—	731819 $\frac{1}{2}$	91477	8	9
1778	—	741426	92678	6	3
1779	—	270839	33854	17	6
1780	—	159428	19928	10	0
1781	—	433198	54149	15	0
1782	—	547336	68417	0	0
1783	{ England Scotland	409084 11331	51135 1416	10	0
				7	6











